

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-07

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SUBJECT: MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION
(IWC)

REFERENCE: STATE A-805 (FEB. 11, 1976)

1. COMCENTER: PLEASE REPEAT STATE 110999 TO ABOVE
ADDRESSEE. TEXT FOLLOWS:

2. " BEGIN SUMMARY: IN RECENT YEARS THE INTERNATIONAL
WHALING COMMISSION (IWC) HAS ESTABLISHED PROGRESSIVELY
MORE EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR WHALES WORLDWIDE.
LIMITED WHALING BY A FEW LESSER WHALING NATIONS (NOTABLY
PERU AND SOOUTH KOREA) STILL NOT MEMBERS OF IWC. DIMI-
NISHES INTERNATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF IWC CONSERVATION RE-
GIME; ACCORDINGLY, IWC AND USG HAS BE SEEKING TO PERSUADE
THESE COUNTRIES TO JOIN. AT SAME TIME, IN ORDER TO
BALANCE THIS PROSPECTIVE ADDITION TOWHALINGNATION VOTING
POWER IN IWC AND PREVENT POSSIBLE RESULTANT DOWNGRADING
OF IWC CONSERVATION PROGRAM, USG ALSO DESIRES ENCOURAGE ADDI-
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TIONAL COSERVATION-MINDED NON-WHALING STATES TO JOIN. END
SUMMARY.

3. FOR THE HAGUE AND STOCKHOLM: NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN,

AND NEW ZEALAND WERE NON-WHALING NATIONS APPROACHED ON
SUBJECT LAST YEAR (REFAIR). NEW ZEALAND SINCE HAS BE-

COME IWC MEMBER AND NETHERLANDS AND SWEDEN HAVE BEEN SENDING OBSERVERS. WE BELIEVE BOTH LATTER COUNTRIES SHARE U.S. CONCERNS ON WHALE CONSERVATION AND WOULD BE WELCOME ADDITIONS TO IWC. WE HAVE RECEIVED PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS THAT NETHERLANDS IS PLANNING TO JOIN AND WE WISH GIVE THIS OUR FULL ENCOURAGEMENT. UNDERSTAND THAT SWEDEN IS ALSO FAVORABLY INCLINED BUT MAY BE HESITANT BECAUSE OF FEELING THAT IT LACKS SPECIFIC EXPERTISE IN FIELD TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY. WE DO NOT SEE THIS AS DISADVANTAGE-- IWC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE, WHICH INCLUDES MOST OF WORLD'S LEADING CETACEAN SPECIALISTS, IS MADE UP OF EXPERTS FROM MANY IWC MEMBERS. ITS SCIENTIFIC ADVICE, ON WHICH COMMISSION MEMBERS BASE THEIR DECISIONS, HAS INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER AND ENABLES LESS SPECIALIZED COMMISSIONS TO TAKE ADEQUATELY INFORMED POSITIONS ON ISSUES BEFORE THEM.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE REITERATE STRONG PREVIOUS U.S. ENCOURAGEMENT TO HOST GOVT TO JOIN IWC; ALSO ADVISE DEPT. OF STATUS OF ITS PLANS TO DO SO. ALSO ADVISE US IF, AS WE HOPE, BOTH COUNTRIES WILL AGAIN BE REPRESENTED AT LEAST BY OBSERVERS AT FORTHCOMING ANNUAL IWC MEETING IN CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA, JUNE 20-24.

5. FOR BERN, BRUSSELS, BONN, SAN JOSE, QUITO: RESPECTIVE HOST GOVERNMENTS ALL SHOWN SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT INTERNATIONALLY AND IN THEIR OWN DOMESTIC PROGRAMS FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONSERVATION OF WILDLIFE AND OTHER LIVING RESOURCES. WE BELIEVE THEY SHARE U.S. PRIORITIES ON WHALE CONSERVATION AND THUS WOULD BE LIKELY CANDIDATE FOR IWC MEMBERSHIP. BEFORE MAKING OFFICIAL U.S. APPROACH ON SUBJECT, REQUEST EMBASSY PROVIDE OWN ASSESSMENT TO DEPT. REGARDING POSSIBILITY THAT HOST GOVT MIGHT RESPOND FAVORABLY TO U.S. ENCOURAGEMENT TO JOIN IWC, POST MIGHT MAKE INFORMAL SOUNDINGS AMONG APPROPRIATE HOST GOVT CONTACTS AT YOUR DISCRETION. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, WE ARE SENDING COPIES OF REFAIR WHICH WAS SENT ON SUBJECT LAST YEAR, PLUS BACKGROUND PAPER ON OVERALL IWC PROGRAM FROM U.S. STANDPOINT.

6. FOLLOWING MAY BE USEFUL SUMMARY DATA ON IWC. ORGANIZATION WAS SET UP IN 1945 UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE REGULATION OF WHALING, TO PERFORM REGULATORY FUNCTION IN INTEREST OF MANAGING WHALE STOCK LEVELS SO AS TO ENABLE ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF WHALING INDUSTRY. FROM THIS PRIMARILY INDUSTRY-ORIENTED APPROACH, IWC HAS EVOLVED IN RECENT YEARS SIGNIFICANTLY TOWARD MORE OF A CONSERVATION ROLE. IT HAS ESTABLISHED COMPLETE PROTECTION FROM COMMERCIAL WHALING FOR FIVE ESPECIALLY REDUCED WHALE SPECIES (BLUE, HUMPBACK, RIGHT, BOWHEAD, AND GRAY), FOR OTHERS IT

SETS SELECTIVE MORATORIA FOR INDIVIDUAL STOCKS FALLING
BELOW A SCIENTIFICALLY DETERMINED SAFE POPULATION LEVEL;
FOR STOCKS OF WHICH SOME COMMERCIAL TAKE CAN BE ALLOWED.
IT ESTABLISHES HARVEST QUOTAS. UNDER RECENTLY ADOPTED
PROCEDURES, SUBSTANTIAL AND PROGRESSIVE OVERALL REDUCTIONS
HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED BY IWC IN THE NUMBER OF WHALES TAKEN
WORLDWIDE IN RECENT SEASONS. THE PRESENT 16-NATION MEM-
BERSHIP OF IWC INCLUDES: ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, BRA-
ZIL, CANADA, DENMARK, FRANCE, ICELAND, JAPAN, MEXICO,
NEW ZEALAND, NORWAY, PANAMA, SOUTH AFRICA, UNITED KING-
DOM, SOVIET UNION, AND THE UNITED STATES. BASIC ANNUAL
COST FOR IWC MEMBERSHIP FOR A NON-WHALING NATION RANGES
AROUND \$4,000 (WHALING NATIONS PAY MORE, COMPUTED ON
CATCH.) VANCE
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Message Attributes

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